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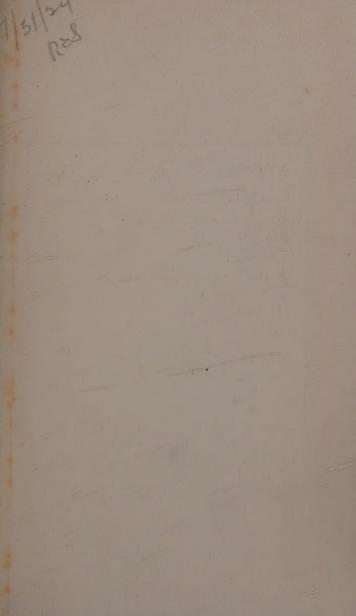
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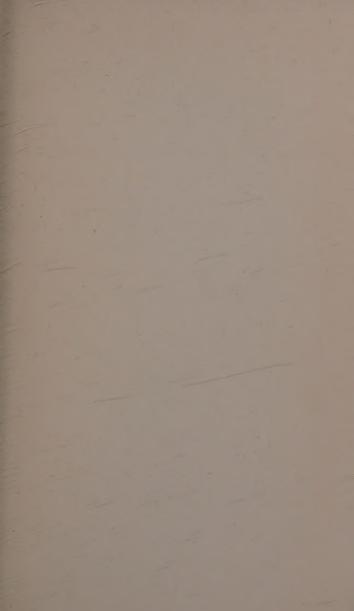
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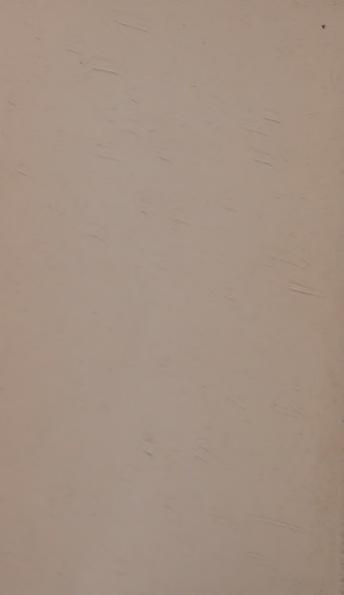
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ADULT PROBATIONER'S THIRD BOOK

REV. J. E. GILBERT, D.D.

Secretary of Spiritual Culture Society

"Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it"

Eph. v, 25

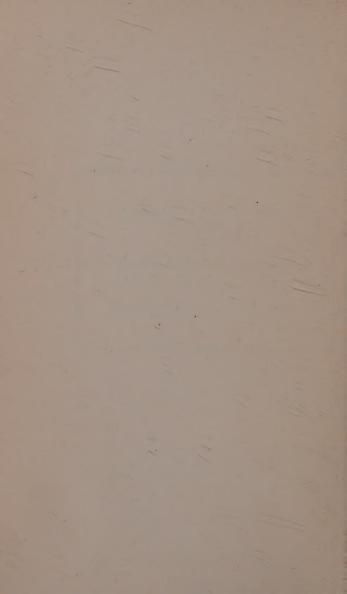


NEW YORK: EATON & MAINS CINCINNATI: JENNINGS & GRAHAM

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THE FULL COURSE

First Term: Religious Experience Second Term: Biblical Doctrine Third Term: American Methodism



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Introduction.

This is the third and last in a series of manuals designed primarily for classes of adult probationers. The books might be used with profit by members in full connection. Another series has been projected for juvenile probationers.

A natural order has been observed in the subjects treated in these books. A genuine experience is confessedly the first concern with our people. Sound doctrine is next in importance. After that one should be made acquainted with the denomination into which he enters that he may be intelligently loyal to its interests.

This book attempts to exhibit the spiritual and doctrinal origin of Methodism, and to trace its historical and organic development, thereby to show that it was divinely appointed to a mission unlike that of any

INTRODUCTION.

other body of believers, and therefore entitled to a place among the religious forces of our time.

The division of Protestantism into sects is one of the most interesting facts in the history of the church. While this division has been attended with some evil, it has resulted in much good. Methodism, as one part of the general church, invites to its communion those only who feel that through such relation they may receive and do good.

This class book is a mere outline, an introduction to more extended studies which all are urged to pursue. The church, a congregation of men and women of like faith and purpose, seeks to enlist and direct the efforts of its members while building them up in Christ. That activity and edification are possible only as the church is understood and loved. It will be loved as it is understood.

INTRODUCTION.

Special attention is called to the Appendix, in which are review questions, a reading course, and other matter helpful to the student in a broader and more thorough investigation of themes treated herein.

Let all who study these manuals cherish the ideal of Christ as announced by Paul, of "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish."

J. E. GILBERT.

Washington, D. C., June 1, 1904.



American Methodism

FIRST LESSON.

THE SPIRIT.

- I. Every religious movement should be judged by the thought or the purpose by which it is dominated. An organization has a life or soul that uses it in the accomplishment of a mission. The outward is the product and the manifestation of the inward.
- 2. Generally the spirit of an enterprise is present from the beginning. The founders incarnate it and give it impetus and direction. They who come after help to carry out the original intent. New ideas and new plans may be introduced, but the initial thought usually survives and dominates all.

- 3. It is universally conceded that Methodism originated in the mind and heart of John Wesley. Evidently he was divinely called and qualified. His associates and successors imbibed his spirit and followed his instructions. He projected himself so thoroughly into all parts of the movement begun by him that it has been properly styled Wesleyan.
- 4. Hence, Methodism can be best understood by those who are acquainted with the history, character, and work of its illustrious founder. The spirit that was in him entered into and lived and wrought in the imposing structure which he began and which is now of world-wide influence.
- 5. The basis of John Wesley's character was laid in a rich inheritance and in wholesome home training. He descended from an honored line of clergymen extending back four generations. He received the instruction and training of a remarkable

mother, who formed in him those habits that shaped his entire career.

- 6. He was educated at Lincoln College, where his native talents were brought out and that scholarship was acquired without which he could never have been an accurate thinker, a good organizer, or a successful leader. The influence of the school combined with that of the home to make the man.
- 7. The low state of morals and of religion prevalent at that time in Great Britain furnished conditions favorable to his lifework. Mr. Wesley failed to find in the state church what would meet the needs of his own soul or those of his countrymen, and he was led to an earnest and prayerful search, Bible in hand, for better spiritual conditions.

8. Those independent efforts, begun in the Holy Club at Oxford, were but partially successful. Fortunately, Mr. Wesley

afterward encountered the Moravians, first on the Atlantic on his way to Georgia, and then in London, and finally on the Continent. From them he learned the spiritual truths and the practical plans needed in subsequent work.

- 9. Thus from four distinct sources—the Epworth rectory, the halls of learning, the cold and formal church life, the simple piety of the Germans—came those elements that blended to produce the man whom God raised up and thrust out to lead a new departure in religion.
- 10. Traces of Mr. Wesley's spirit, gained from these sources, appear in the features and institutions of Methodism. These four forces—blood, environment, education, grace—wrought through him wherever he went and whatever he did, meeting the varying conditions by which he was surrounded and accomplishing their own appropriate results.

- 11. The dominant purpose was "to spread scriptural holiness," as he himself declared —an experience wrought by the Holy Spirit, measured by the word of God, manifested in daily life, an experience contrasting with the dead formalism of the established church. That purpose was formed in the Holy Club.
- 12. The chief method adopted in promoting such experience was to follow the judgment of those who attained it as they were guided by the Holy Spirit. This method, begun at Oxford, produced the Conferences which afterward became the agencies in unifying and regulating the Wesleyan movement.
- 13. This purpose and plan, forming an effective propaganda, were saved from fanaticism by an early and constant recognition of the power of the home and of the school. Prior to Raikes's time Bible schools were established in Methodism. Kings-

wood College came later. The publication of books and tracts received much attention. Family instruction was earnestly enjoined. Wesley reproduced himself in all these features.

14. As Methodism spread, carried to distant lands by emigrants from England and Ireland, the same spirit lived in it. Always and everywhere there was the same emphasis upon Biblical experience, upon popular methods by conference, upon education by school and paper, and upon the care of the young at home.

15. American Methodism has been much influenced by its contact with other denominations and by the social and political life of this country, but in all essentials it is Wesleyan.

Reflections. This is God's method. By heredity, by home training, by college instruction, by social environment, by his word, by his Spirit, he brings forth in his

own time the man for the hour. He works by long-established and well-known agencies according to the immutable laws fixed in human nature.

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SECOND LESSON.

THE DOCTRINES.

- I. From the first Methodism was distinctively spiritual. Other religious movements began with doctrinal statements, some of them protests against the errors of the Romish Church. Mr. Wesley accepted in a general way the conclusions reached by the Reformers, and devoted himself to the promotion of experimental religion.
- 2. There were two systems of theology, bearing the names of their authors, John Calvin of France (1509-64) and James Arminius of Holland (1560-1609). The first laid great emphasis upon divine sovereignty, the other upon human freedom. The differences between the systems were debated with much spirit for many years.
 - 3. The Church of England was Calvin-

istic, but not in an extreme way. Its thirtynine articles, the result of thirteen years' effort, begun under Cranmer to settle the faith, were adopted by Parliament in 1562, when Arminius was but a child of two years.

- 4. As a priest in the established church Mr. Wesley assented to those articles at his ordination (1725), and yet in a letter to his mother written about that time he said, "The doctrine of predestination as maintained by the rigid Calvinists is very shocking and ought to be abhorred."
- 5. In the progress of his wonderful work, calling men from sin to faith in Christ, Mr. Wesley was able to see more clearly than did either Calvin or Arminius the essential truths of religion. These he stated with remarkable force in his sermons. He has been known in ecclesiastical history as a modified Arminian, founding a school of religious thought of his own.

- 6. When American Methodists were set off by themselves in 1784 (see next lesson) Mr. Wesley might have written a creed for them. For this task he was well qualified by his scholarship, his piety, his experience, and his acquaintance with the thought and need of the time. He preferred, however, to revise the articles of the Church of England, then two hundred years old.
- 7. There was wisdom in this course. It preserved in some measure the continuity of faith, always desirable in ecclesiastical affairs, and it acknowledged the right of the people to change the forms of their belief and give room for new thought and activity. The revision was both conservative and progressive.
- 8. Mr. Wesley reduced the number of articles from thirty-nine to twenty-four. One other, the twenty-third, was inserted by the General Conference of 1804, declaring that it is the duty of all ministers and

Christians "to support the government of the country" in which they reside, thus making twenty-five articles, the present number.

9. The revision made by Mr. Wesley is particularly interesting because of what is omitted. All those matters about which there had been heated debate were stricken out and passed over in total silence. In this way the American church was delivered from the controversies of the centuries and committed to a mission of the highest spiritual import.

ro. The parts of the thirty-nine articles retained embody the common faith of all Protestants, concerning God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures, justification, the church, the sacraments, the ceremonies of worship, and a few other points, forming a platform on which all evangelical Christians might unite for the conquest of the world to Christ.

- II. In the articles copied by Mr. Wesley from the English creed there are a few verbal changes, some made by him and some made by order of our General Conference, all designed to improve the style, to make the sense more evident, or to avoid any seeming support of doctrines that had been rejected. These changes still further indicate the right of revision.
- 12. In their present form the twenty-five articles are virtually Arminian, but more emphatically Wesleyan. They lay broad and deep the foundations of a doctrinal system that honors God, exalts his word, and recognizes the right and ability of every man to become savingly acquainted with Jesus Christ.
- 13. The excellence of this doctrinal system appears in two remarkable facts. There have been divisions in the American church, but none of them has originated in any lack of harmony in the faith. The articles have

been carried into all parts of the world through our missionary operations, and peoples of many nations have accepted them as gladly as has the church at home.

14. Without doubt the doctrines have had much to do with the success of American Methodism. Our ministers have rarely needed to defend them. The great body of the people, scholars included, have received them without debate, and other denominations have conceded the excellence of the statements.

15. It must, however, be remembered, that the articles are of human origin, merely an honest attempt to express the truth. Back of them lies the word of God, the final standard of all faith, so "that whatsoever is not read therein, or may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed."

Reflections. Sound doctrine promotes good living (I Tim. iv, 6). Truth is not

determined by majorities. Every man should think for himself, prove all things, and charitably hold his convictions (I Thess. v, 21). With supreme regard to revelation a man should accept guidance of the learned and unite with those with whom he is most in accord.

THIRD LESSON.

THE HISTORY.

- I. METHODISM was introduced into America by emigrants from Great Britain who came here to improve their worldly condition and who brought with them their religious convictions and their loyalty to Mr. Wesley. Their labors here in behalf of religion were self-prompted—they had no authority or instruction from anyone.
- 2. It is generally believed that Philip Embury, an Irish local preacher, at the suggestion of Barbara Heck, a consecrated and plain woman also from the Emerald Isle, delivered the first Methodist sermon in New York city in 1766, and that he dedicated the first church erected for the Methodists in this country, two years later, in John Street of the same

city, on a site still held by the denomi-

- 3. Shortly after this—the dates cannot be fixed with certainty—Thomas Webb, an officer in the English army, preached in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, Robert Strawbridge in Maryland, and Robert Williams in Virginia and North Carolina. In each case the converts were gathered into classes under suitable leaders, and appointments for preaching were observed with some regularity.
 - 4. The preaching of those days treated the themes which have been the rally cry of Methodists from the beginning—a present, full, free, and conscious salvation. The appeals were to adults, and the responses were from all classes, but chiefly among the poor. The one grand purpose was to save men from their sins and to promote holiness of life.
 - 5. When American Methodism began

the Congregationalists were in New England, the Baptists in Rhode Island, the Quakers and Presbyterians in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the Lutherans in Delaware, the Roman Catholics in Maryland, and the Churchmen and Moravians in Virginia and the Carolinas.

- 6. This variety of faith in the colonies promoted a spirit of toleration which was greatly helpful to Methodism. But the denominations already established had ordained and trained ministers whose superior abilities contrasted with the deficient education of the Methodist preachers, who were most of them laymen.
- 7. The great awakening under Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield, however, had prepared the way for the preaching of experimental religion which was the theme most earnestly and successfully presented by the Methodist preachers. Indeed, they appeared to be indifferent to other themes.

- 8. The work grew to such proportions that its leaders appealed to Mr. Wesley for help. Responding to these requests, he sent over Richard Boardman and Joseph Pillmore in 1769, and two years later, in response to another appeal, Francis Asbury and Richard Wright came, the former being designated the superintendent of all the work in America.
- 9. The first American Conference was held in Philadelphia in June, 1773, when ten preachers, all from England, came together, Mr. Asbury presiding. Their appointments were New York, Philadelphia, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia, with twelve hundred lay members.
- War many Methodist preachers and most of the clergy of the established church returned to England. This precipitated the question of the sacraments, as up to that time the people had received them from the

English churches to which they adhered. In the changed political conditions they were deprived of both ordinances because there was no one to administer them.

- Wesley determined at the close of the war to set off the American Methodists by themselves, and to give them ministers. Believing that as a presbyter of the Church of England he had authority to do so, he ordained Dr. Thomas Coke and sent him with instructions to ordain Mr. Asbury and to perfect details with the preachers in this country.
- 12. On his arrival Dr. Coke called the preachers to a Conference at Baltimore on Christmas Day, 1784. To that body he delivered the letter of Mr. Wesley, the articles of religion, a form for ordination, the Psalms and prayers. The body then proceeded to organize under the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United

States, and to elect and ordain Mr. Asbury as general superintendent or bishop.

- 13. At that time there were eighty preachers and fifteen thousand lay members. The territory occupied was a narrow strip along the Atlantic seaboard. The new organization gave hope to all, and the growth thereafter was very rapid.
- 14. During the twenty-eight years following Methodism reached Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, the Gulf of Mexico, Upper and Lower Canada, and extended to the Mississippi. This extension of territory and the increase of numbers to one hundred and seventy-five thousand led to a change in the General Conference, which had included all the elders, but became a delegated body in 1812. See Lesson V.
- 15. The history of Methodism in America from the creation of a delegated General Conference has been a continuous progress until at the beginning of the twen-

tieth century it numbered six millions of communicants in all branches. The principal events will be sketched in the lessons on Branches, Societies, Institutions, and Missions.

Reflections. The marvelous growth of American Methodism must be ascribed to the blessing of Almighty God, whose hand has been visible under many circumstances, a proof that Christ's promised presence with his ministers is a guarantee of success.

FOURTH LESSON.

THE BRANCHES.

- 1. The Methodists of the United States have not all remained in one body. Adhering to the doctrines and general purpose of Mr. Wesley, they have disagreed in matters of administration, and, in the exercise of their liberty, have formed sixteen different organizations. The Methodist Episcopal Church, the mother of all, has easily retained leadership in numbers and influence.
- 2. In 1790 Rev. Jacob Albright, a Methodist minister in eastern Pennsylvania, felt called to labor among the Germans. As the Methodist Episcopal Church was not disposed at that time to begin services in the German language, he formed the *Evangelical Association* for that purpose, with the hearty approval of all.

- 3. In 1792 Rev. James O'Kelly, a Methodist minister, ordained elder at the Christmas Conference of 1784, aggrieved by the appointment given him by Bishop Asbury, sought to change the polity of the church by restricting the power of the episcopacy, and, failing in that, organized a new body called *Republican Methodists*.
- 4. In 1813 Rev. Peter Spencer founded in Wilmington, Delaware, a church composed of colored people, called at first African Union, but after the civil war *Union American Methodist Episcopal Church*.
- 5. In consequence of a difficulty concerning seats in St. George's Church, Philadelphia, the colored members withdrew and opened a separate place of worship. For a time the congregation retained relations with the Methodist Episcopal Church, but in 1816 a convention was called and the African Methodist Episcopal Church was organized.

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- 6. In 1820 another body of colored people for somewhat similar reasons was formed in New York city, styled the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Zion. From this was formed in after years the Zion Union Apostolic Church.
- 7. From the foregoing statements it appears that all defections from the Methodist Episcopal Church on account of race or color occurred during the first forty years of the denomination's history.
- 8. The first great secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church occurred in 1828, bearing at first the title Associated Methodist Churches, and later the Methodist Protestant Churches. It was the outcome of discussions concerning the episcopacy and the election of presiding elders, which, begun in the time of O'Kelly, agitated the church continually until the formation of this body without those officers.
 - 9. In 1843 the Wesleyan Methodist Con-

nection of America was formed at a convention in Utica, New York, composed of those who were opposed to slavery. The new church had no bishops.

10. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was organized in May, 1845, in the city of Louisville, by a convention of delegates representing the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding States. This action was precipitated by the passage of a resolution at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in May, 1844, restraining Bishop Andrew from the exercise of his episcopal office until he should liberate the slaves which he had acquired by marriage.

11. In 1852 certain members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, residing in Georgia, desiring to obtain a permanent instead of an itinerant ministry, organized themselves as the Congregational Methodist Church. This body afterward

divided into two parts, one on the color line, and the other on questions of local control, styled Congregational Methodist Colored and New Congregational Methodists.

- 12. A movement begun in Genesee Annual Conference in the interest of simplicity of dress, free pews, entire sanctification, and in opposition to Free Masonry, resulted in the formation of the *Free Methodist Church* in 1860, without bishops.
- 13. The *Primitive Methodist* Church, formed in 1860, was an offshoot from the Methodist Protestant Church, partly on the question of race distinction, but chiefly to realize what was believed to be more in accord with the spirit of Mr. Wesley.
- 14. After the war of rebellion the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, set off by themselves (1874) under the title of the *Colored Methodist Episcopal Church*, all the members of that body of African

descent, and in various ways helped them to become an influential body. Another organization, the *Independent Methodist*, was formed in the North, about this time, to escape the connectional burdens of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the *Evangelical Missionary Association* was begun to conduct missionary movements without the restrictions laid upon them by a society.

15. Thus it appears that divisions have occurred for the following reasons: On account of race, seven; of government, six; of slavery, two; of usages, one. It is an interesting fact that the Methodist Episcopal Church has admitted all for which the separatists contended except the episcopacy and slavery. The one was deemed vital to government, the other to morals and religion. However, in the order of Providence the slavery question has been eliminated through the fortunes of a long and bloody war.

Reflections. Organic unity is desirable but not necessary. Every man must be true to his convictions. When any considerable number fail to agree with their associates it is better that they should separate than that they should dispute. That which is not of God will come to naught. Men may safely intrust their views and policies to the divine approval.

FIFTH LESSON.

THE GOVERNMENT.

- I. THE fact, as shown in the last lesson, that six bodies of American Methodism originated in different views of government invests that subject with peculiar interest. Without further reference to the branches we may well consider the principles and methods of government of the Methodist Episcopal Church.
- 2. Methodists do not claim any scriptural authority for their government. They do not even believe that the New Testament prescribes any particular form of government. They hold that Christ left his followers free to do what their godly judgments might approve in prosecuting the work committed to them.
 - 3. This first principle controlled Mr.

Wesley and his associates from the beginning. That eminent man felt that he had been called to an important mission and that he had a right to determine the modes of procedure. He did not intend to form a church, but to care for souls that were given to him.

- 4. The government was therefore the result of the needs of the work. Naturally, some things were determined by Mr. Wesley alone, as the father of the movement, a kind of bishop or apostle, divinely raised up. Other matters were decided in consultation with the preachers who cooperated with him.
- 5. Out of this beginning came two principles, applicable first in England and afterward in America—that of supervision and that of Conference legislation. These two principles established a connectional policy, making all members parts of one great body and using that body for the general good.

- 6. The principle of supervision in the Methodist Episcopal Church is applied in three ways: First, in a board of superintendents or bishops, who travel through the connection, preside at Annual Conferences, and appoint pastors; second, in presiding elders, who supervise the work of a number of churches in a given district; third, in preachers in charge of stations and circuits, who supervise the interests of a smaller number of people.
- 7. This principle of supervision is also applied in the direction of great interests of the denomination under the care of boards, which will be treated at greater length in the sixth, seventh, and eighth lessons. It is claimed that this method secures efficiency as well as unity.
- 8. The legislative department of the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church is vested primarily in a delegated body, called the General Conference, that meets

once in four years. It has power to determine all those general kinds of work which the denomination shall undertake and the mode by which that work shall be done. It does not forbid other work, but it designates what the whole church shall engage to do.

9. The results of this legislation are given out in a book, called the Discipline, which is arranged in convenient chapters and is in its several editions an exhibit of the wisdom of the church in its efforts to spread the cause of Methodism at home and abroad. The book has been justly prized by Methodists and admired by others, and should be studied by probationers.

10. This Discipline is in three great parts which are subject to change, with certain restrictions by the General Conference—the articles of religion, presenting the faith; the ritual, the form of conducting sacraments and ceremonies; and the regulations,

the rules of action partly for individuals and partly for churches.

11. The General Conference, as stated elsewhere, was composed at first of the whole body of elders, and those only. In 1812 it consisted of delegates chosen by the Annual Conferences. In 1872 two laymen were admitted from each Annual Conference. In 1904 the lay delegates were made equal in number to the ministerial delegates.

12. The Annual Conference is not for legislation, but for review. It may, however, take action on matters of a purely local character, obligating the preachers to certain policies and measures.

of trustees, stewards, leaders, and a few others with the pastor, affords the presiding elder once in three months opportunity to hear reports and to learn in this way the condition of each charge. This

review enables him to report to the bishop at the Annual Conference and to give advice to the pastor, frequently helping him in the adjustment of his work. This Conference has power to decide certain local matters, but always according to conditions prescribed by the General Conference.

14. It will be seen by the foregoing that power is lodged in the whole church and is delegated to a body composed of elect ministers and laymen who distribute that power to certain officers and agents. These exercise the authority so received in a specific manner in Conferences, in churches, in societies, and boards.

15. In this way the wisdom, wealth, and influence of the Methodist people are carried up into one large and imposing body to be used for the good of the whole and for the spread of scriptural holiness, a combination that secures unity of purpose and plan and concentration of effort. Those

who have been restless under the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church have lost sight of this fundamental principle.

Reflections. These are the two root ideas of our governmental system, aggregation and distribution. Every member is expected to make his contribution to that sum total that shall be employed for the accomplishment of the grand end proposed.

SIXTH LESSON.

THE SOCIETIES.

- I. WHENEVER the General Conference, the governing body of the Methodist Episcopal Church, decides that the denomination ought to promote any particular work it creates a board or society with power to supervise and direct that work, and elects agents and fixes some city as headquarters.
- 2. This board or society receives instructions from the General Conference concerning the policies and measures to be adopted and acts within the limitations of those instructions. At the end of each quadrennium a report of what has been done is submitted to the General Conference, when new legislation may be enacted.
- 3. In this way the moral and financial strength of the entire church is directed into

certain lines of activity, and every minister is required to submit the various causes to his people, who are pledged to contribute. Results may be expected through such a system which would be impossible by any other mode of procedure. Moreover, the annual appeals in behalf of the different interests have an educational influence of great value.

- 4. This method has also been adopted by all Protestant churches, indicating that it is in harmony with the spirit of the civil government and of American social life. It has many advantages which will readily occur to any reflecting mind.
- 5. Thus far the General Conference has ordered nine different organizations. In recent years there has been an effort to combine these and so diminish the number. That effort has been successful, the General Conference of 1904 having effected such reorganization under three heads. At pres-

ent they stand in the following chronological order.

- 6. The Tract Society, organized in 1817, headquarters in New York, was the first of these general movements. Its object is to print brief essays on religious themes for free distribution chiefly among the unconverted.
- 7. The Missionary Society, formed in 1819, has its offices in New York city. It promotes the cause of missions at home and abroad. Probably it is the most influential of all the societies of Methodism, receiving more money than any other.
- 8. The Sunday School Union was formed in 1824 and adopted by the General Conference in 1828. It supplies the Sunday schools of the denomination with suitable literature—books, papers, lesson leaves, and other matter—and seeks to promote general interest throughout the denomination in the study of the sacred Scriptures.

- 9. The Church Extension Society, offices in Philadelphia, was established by the General Conference in 1864. Its purpose is to assist weak congregations in the erection of houses of worship, which it does by loans and gifts. The Society owes its existence to the difficulty experienced by Western men in securing aid for church enterprises.
- To. The Freedmen's Aid and Southern Education Society, offices in Cincinnati, was established in 1866 and recognized by the General Conference in 1868. Its purpose at the beginning was to aid the freedmen of the South to obtain an education, so much needed after the emancipation. Afterward it included the poor whites of the South in its efforts.
- 11. The Board of Education, headquarters in New York city, formed in 1868, assists young people of both sexes, chiefly young men preparing for the ministry,

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to obtain an education, by loaning them money.

- 12. The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, begun in 1869, headquarters in Boston, enlists women as missionaries among women in heathen lands. This service was made necessary by the fact that men as missionaries are not admitted into the homes of those countries, because of the seclusion of women.
- 13. The Woman's Home Missionary Society, established in 1888, with offices in Cincinnati, is, like the last-named organization, composed of women, and is in a measure like the other society independent of General Conference control. It directs the efforts of American women for the benefit of American women, and trains and sends out workers.
- 14. The Epworth League, headquarters in Chicago, was formed in 1888. Its object is to promote the spiritual and intellectual

welfare of the young people of Methodism and to use them in behalf of various denominational interests. The League is thoroughly organized in Conference, district, and chapter auxiliaries.

15. The General Conference societies are not intended to exclude other forms of activity. Any number of Methodists may associate themselves in any common work. Hence have sprung up several Brotherhoods and the Spiritual Culture Society.

Reflections. Life reveals itself in activity. United activity indicates common life. All activity requires organization. Hence a denomination may be judged by the number, character, and efficiency of its societies and their ability to enlist the membership of the church.

SEVENTH LESSON.

THE INSTITUTIONS.

- I. THE work done by church societies is distributive, or diffusive; it seeks results in all parts of the connection through agencies that operate in the entire field. There are other kinds of work that are centralized, confined to localities, in buildings erected for the purpose, the results of which are felt everywhere. This work is committed to institutions.
 - 2. The Methodist Episcopal Church has multiplied its institutions to meet needs, establishing only what people considered to be in harmony with the spirit and mission of the denomination, as one of the ecclesiastical bodies appointed to promote the kingdom of heaven. These institutions have been partly under the direct super-

vision of the General Conference, and partly under the control of the Annual Conferences or of the societies of the church.

- 3. These institutions may be classed under three heads—literary, educational, and benevolent—having for their object to care for the mind and the body, by the promotion of knowledge and care of the sick under religious influences.
- 4. The Methodist Book Concern, begun in 1789 in Philadelphia with a small borrowed capital and removed in 1804 to New York city, has been through all its history devoted to the publication and sale of suitable literature for the church. The Western Concern, headquarters at Cincinnati, was established in 1824, deemed to be necessary because the lack of facilities of transportation prevented Western men from obtaining supplies promptly.
 - 5. Both the Eastern and Western Con-

cerns are managed by agents and supervised by the Book Committee, the agents and the committee being elected by the General Conference, to which they are amenable. Depositories established at Boston, Pittsburg, Buffalo, Chicago, San Francisco, Kansas City, and other places facilitate the sales.

- 6. The periodicals of the church, twentynine official and nineteen unofficial, the former ordered by the General Conference and edited by men elected by that body, are published weekly, monthly, or quarterly, furnishing information concerning the church, discussing its policies and measures and presenting valuable reading matter on various topics, both religious and secular.
- 7. The colleges and universities of the church, some for ladies only but most of them for both sexes, now number fifty-five, not counting those in foreign lands, and

contain more than thirty thousand students. They rank with similar institutions supported by other churches and by the state.

- 8. The church maintains fifty-nine schools, called academies or seminaries, of lower grade than colleges, comparable to the high schools of our city public school systems. These have received large numbers of young people who could not afford the time or expense of a liberal education.
- 9. The Methodist Episcopal Church has twenty-two theological institutions, the first having been established by Rev. John Dempster in 1847 in Concord, New Hampshire, and afterward removed and made part of Boston University.
- 10. The Methodist Episcopal Church has displayed much interest and zeal in its training schools designed to equip laymen of either sex for service for Christ. Of these five are for deaconesses and nine for

nurses, all the result of efforts put forth in the last twenty years. These institutions have enabled the church to advance to greater efficiency those pious young persons who consecrate themselves to the service of Christ.

- II. The church maintains fifty-seven homes: ten for aged people; fourteen for boys and girls, some of them orphans and others invalid or needy; and twenty-three for deaconesses, where they may board at a moderate rate and enjoy the association of others in the same calling while devoting their time through the week days to the duties of their office.
- 12. There are twenty-one hospitals under the care of the Methodist Episcopal Church, widely distributed in the different cities and States, ministering to the sick of all classes, the rich and poor alike, and displaying the spirit of Jesus, the great Physician. Some of these hospitals are among

the best in the land, reflecting much credit on their managers.

- 13. It is worthy of special note that wherever the Methodist Episcopal Church has gone these institutions have been established. The printing press, the bookstore, the paper, the college, the seminary, the theological school, the training school, the home, and the hospital, all after one general pattern, have entered all lands under the guidance of our church.
- 14. There has been an expansion of the institution idea in these later years that is truly wonderful. Most of all that has been done under this head in our church belongs to the last half century, and the money invested, collected generally in small sums from the people, is fabulous in amount.
- 15. This topic indicates that the church has caught the spirit of the age, that it ministers to all sides of man's nature according to the humanitarian tendencies in society.

Reflections. He who builds an institution is like him who digs a well in the desert. Men in all the after years shall be blessed as are the weary travelers by refreshing waters as they travel over the dusty way.

EIGHTH LESSON.

THE MISSIONS.

- I. JOHN WESLEY declared that Methodism was appointed to spread scriptural holiness and that his parish was the world. These statements became the watchwords of his followers in all lands. The terms "Methodism" and "missions," if not synonymous, are inseparable.
- 2. At its beginning American Methodism was little more than an evangelistic or missionary movement. The ministers sought out the unsaved everywhere. They went forth into the wilderness, followed the hardy pioneer to his cabin, and encountered all the hardships to which missionaries are usually subject.
- 3. All members of the church are pledged to the cause of missions by the questions

put to them at their reception into full connection, at which time they are expected to promise that they will contribute of their substance to the support of the benevolent enterprises of the church and endeavor to promote the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

- 4. The distinctive missionary enterprises of the church began in a most interesting way among the most lowly classes of the people. In 1816 John Stewart, a colored man, converted at a camp meeting near Marietta, Ohio, traveled northwest through that State, under the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Coming at length to the Wyandotte Indians, he preached, and many were converted.
- 5. The news of the work spread rapidly throughout the connection and led to the organization of the Missionary Society in 1819, in the city of New York, which was adopted by the General Conference in 1820.

At the time there were but two other missionary societies in this country, the American Board (1810) and the Baptist Missionary Union (1814).

- 6. Among the men who helped to organize our Missionary Society were several master spirits—Bishops McKendree, George, and Roberts, Dr. Nathan Bangs, Dr. Thomas Mason, Dr. Joshua Soule (the last-named afterward becoming bishop), and several laymen who held positions of honor and trust in the church.
- 7. The society devoted itself at first to missions in the United States, first among the Indians, afterward among the colored people, gradually extending its operations as its funds permitted among the white population, and seeking to enter into every neglected portion of the land. It has expended fully one half of its funds in this home field.
 - 8. The foreign missions of the Methodist

Episcopal Church began in 1830, and gradually extended into nearly all lands, having now stations in Africa, South America, Asia, Europe, and North America.

- 9. An orderly statement of the missionary operations of the society would require many volumes. In the planting and progress of the work the heroic spirit has been displayed, shedding luster on the church. The self-sacrifice of the missionaries may be compared with that of the apostles.
- 10. The work has progressed in the following forms: First, a few ministers held simple services among the people, organizing the converts into classes and societies and erecting houses of worship; second, other missionaries entered the field as helpers, and Conferences were held, recognized at first as Mission Conferences, erected later into Annual Conferences; third, bishops were sent to these Conferences, and missionary bishops afterward elected.

II. The present mission fields according to date of beginning are: Liberia, 1833; South America, 1835; Foochow, 1847; North Germany, 1849; Norway, 1853; Sweden, 1853; North India, 1856; Switzerland, 1856; Denmark, 1857; Bulgaria, 1857; Hinghua (in China), 1864; Central China, 1867; North China, 1869; Italy, 1871; Bombay, 1872; Bengal, 1872; Japan, 1873; South Japan, 1873; Mexico, 1873: South India, 1876; Western South America, 1877; North India, 1877; West China, 1881; Finland, 1883; Malaysia, 1884; Korea, 1885; West Central Africa, 1885; East Central Africa, 1885; South Germany, 1893; Northwest India, 1893; Burma, 1901.

12. From this it appears that there are thirty fields—three in Africa, two in South America, fifteen in Asia, nine in Europe, and one in North America.

13. Fifteen of these are Annual Confer-

ences, sending delegates to the General Conference who are entitled to all the rights and privileges accorded to delegates from the Annual Conferences in this country, forming thus an integral part of the great connectional system that is now world-wide. Thus in the missions and work of the Methodist Episcopal Church John Wesley's desire for a world parish is realized.

14. These foreign mission fields contain 198,500 members and probationers—3,600 in Africa, 58,800 in Europe, 125,000 in Asia, 5,600 in South America, 5,500 in Mexico.

15. Through its foreign missions the Methodist Episcopal Church is now preaching the Gospel in eighteen different languages. The results must be great in evangelizing the nations and in preparing immigrants to our own country. The domestic missions reach an equal number in our own land.

Orders. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end."—Jesus.

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APPENDIX.

A. Review Questions.

(To be used in private and in the class.)

I. Spirit of Methodism.—What is the just measure of a religious movement? Who was the historic founder of Methodism? What four influences shaped Mr. Wesley's character and work? What was accomplished in him at Lincoln College? What among the Moravians? What influence was exerted upon him by the established church and the tone of English society? What was declared to be his purpose? How did he expect to gain that purpose? What saved Methodism from fanaticism? How has American Methodism been influenced?

II. Doctrines of Methodism.—What systems of theology were there in England

when Mr. Wesley began? Which was held by the established church? Did Mr. Wesley fully approve that system? What did he give American Methodists in 1784? Why was revision desirable? How many articles in our creed? How is the excellence of our creed shown? Which of our articles was formed by the General Conference? How might other Christians feel concerning our doctrinal system? How do we hold our creed—as subordinate to what?

III. History of Methodism. — Who brought Methodism to this country? Who were some of the first preachers? What were their chief themes of discourse? What glenominations preceded the Methodists in this country, and where? What hindered and helped early Methodism in this country? When and where was the first American Conference held? What induced Mr. Wesley to organize Americans into a separate body? How was

the Methodist Episcopal Church organized? Who was made the first bishop? When and why was the General Conference made a delegated body?

IV. Branches of Methodism.—Into how many bodies have American Methodists been divided? What has been the cause of division? In what have they all agreed? What bodies have formed on the color line? What bodies on account of slavery? What bodies on account of the episcopacy? What bodies on account of language? What bodies on account of the itinerancy? What bodies have sought simplicity in public worship? What bodies have objected to connectional missionary movements?

V. Government of Methodist Episcopal Church.—How is our government sustained by Scripture? How did the government originate? What two principles are there in the system? How is supervision exercised? Where is legislative power de-

posited? What changes have occurred in the composition of the General Conference, and in what years? What book contains the laws and regulations of the church? What is the purpose of the Annual Conference? Of the Quarterly Conference? What is the duty of a bishop and of a presiding elder?

elder?

VI. Societies of Methodism.—How does the General Conference plan for the general work? What is the advantage of the system? How far have other denominations adopted this system? What is the work of the Missionary Society? Of the Church Extension Society? Of the Board of Education? Of the Sunday School Union? Of the Freedmen's Aid and Southern Education Society? Of the Epworth League? Of the two women's societies?

VII. Institutions of Methodism.—Wherein does an institution differ from a so-

ciety? What three kinds of institutions have we? What was the origin and what is the purpose of the Book Concern? What periodicals have we in kind and number? What colleges and universities? What academies? What theological seminaries? What homes and hospitals? What training schools? What do these institutions indicate?

VIII. Missions of Methodism.—What views of Mr. Wesley embodied the missionary spirit? What was American Methodism at the beginning? How and when did the Missionary Society originate? Who were prominent in organizing the society? Where did the society begin its work? How much and how long did the society devote itself strictly to home missions? What missions have been established in Africa? in South America? in Europe? in Asia? How many members and probationers in foreign mission fields?

B. STUDY TOPICS.

(To be used by those who desire to study more widely on the themes of this term.)

- I. The state of religion in the English church in the eighteenth century.
- 2. The doctrine, history, and life of the Moravians.
- 3. Religious experience in the Wesleyan movement.
 - 4. The doctrinal system of John Calvin.
- 5. The doctrinal system of James Arminius.
 - 6. The thirty-nine articles.
 - 7. The twenty-five articles.
 - 8. The early Methodists in America.
- Methodism and the American Revolution.
 - 10. The Christmas Conference.
 - II. The opposition to episcopacy.
- 12. The slavery agitation in the Methodist Church.

- 13. The lay delegation question.
- 14. The right of church division.
- 15. The Methodist idea of the episcopacy.
 - 16. The presiding elder and his work.
- 17. The General Conference—its composition and powers.
- 18. The Methodist Discipline, past and present.
- 19. The society idea for advancing specific causes.
- 20. The institution idea for perpetuating and enlarging beneficent features.
 - 21. The educational policy of the church.
- 22. Woman's place and work in Methodism.
- 23. The genius and scope of American missions.
- 24. The conquest of the world for Christ and Methodist equipment for her share in that conquest.
 - 25. Ecumenical Methodism.

C. READING COURSE.

(Books recommended for those who desire sources of additional information. May be ordered of the Methodist Book Concern.)

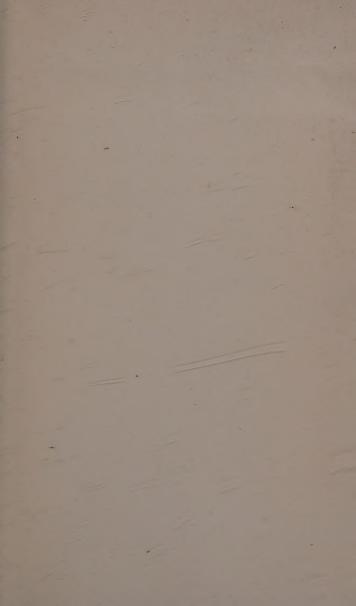
- I. LIFE AND TIMES OF JOHN WESLEY. By Rev. L. Tyerman. 3 vols. Price, \$7.50.
- 2. THE WONDERFUL LIFE. Story of John Wesley. By Rev. D. Wise, D.D. Price, 90 cents.
- 3. Compendium of Methodism. By Rev. J. Porter, D.D. Price, \$1.25.
- 4. The Why of Methodism. By Rev.D. Dorchester, D.D. Price, 60 cents.
- 5. AMERICAN METHODISM. By Rev. Abel Stevens, D.D. Price, \$2.50.
- 6. HISTORY OF METHODISM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. By Rev. W. W. Bennett. Price, 90 cents.
- 7. Manual of Methodism. By Bostwick Hawley, D.D. Price, 60 cents.

8. Missions of the Methodist Episco-Pal Church. By Rev. John M. Reid, D.D. Revised by J. T. Gracey, D.D. 3 vols. Price, \$4.

9. The Methodist Discipline.

10. The Methodist Catechism.

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